

STATEMENT
by H.E. Mr. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine,
at the 18th OSCE Ministerial Council

(Vilnius, 6 December 2011)

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our Lithuanian hosts and friends for the warm hospitality extended to all participants of this Ministerial Council meeting in the beautiful city of Vilnius.

I also wish to thank the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, Audronius Azubalis and his dedicated team for their excellent performance throughout the year.

Mr. Chairman,

I will start with the most pressing issue. Protracted conflicts continue to pose the greatest threat to regional stability and security in the OSCE space. Their resolution must remain the highest priority for the OSCE and all participating States. As the 2013 OSCE Chairmanship, Ukraine will actively pursue this goal.

Being a state-guarantor and co-mediator in the Transdniestrian settlement process, Ukraine highly commends the efforts of the Lithuanian OSCE Chairmanship in resuming the official 5+2 negotiations on the Transdniestrian settlement. We particularly welcome the holding of a renewed official meeting in the 5+2 format in Vilnius few days ago.

Mr. Chairman,

In the field of arms control and confidence building measures, we welcome completion of the new phase of updating the 1999 Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. However, while new elements of the VD 2011 improve verification activities, they fall short of expanding the scope of CSBMs or enhancing military transparency.

Ukraine hopes that further updates of the document will reflect military, security and technological changes in the OSCE area over the last decade.

Indeed, we do share concerns of decreased effectiveness of the CFE Treaty and its inadequacy to the current political military situation on the continent.

The participating States can achieve more within the OSCE framework in promoting non-proliferation. To this end, last year Ukraine together with Poland put forward a proposal for an update of the 1994 OSCE Principles Governing Non-

Proliferation. We hope that this Ministerial Council will task the Forum for Security Cooperation to explore ways to update the Principles.

Mr. Chairman,

Further improvement in implementation of the OSCE commitments undertaken by the participating States, including in the human dimension, will also remain the focus of Ukraine's OSCE Chairmanship. Let me reiterate Ukraine's consistent commitment to the rule of law and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this regard, the work being done by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, including in election observation, deserve our continued support.

We highlight the importance of the mandate of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Ukraine will also continue to provide its full support to the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

Mr. Chairman,

We should finally transform the OSCE into a full-fledged international organization.

It is also crucial to identify the best means to use available resources efficiently, without undermining the OSCE's capabilities and programmatic activities. With this in mind, Ukraine suggests to extend the functions of the OSCE External Auditor, which are currently performed by the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine, for an additional one year.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE should pursue its interaction with partner States based on mutual respect, complementarity and upon their request. We look forward to the future discussion on further expansion of Mongolia's cooperation with the OSCE.

In conclusion, let me once again reiterate our sincere appreciation to the Lithuanian OSCE Chairmanship and wish every success to the Irish OSCE Chairmanship in 2012, to whom we pledge our full support on the way towards promoting mutual confidence, dialogue and cooperation as well as making our common vision of a security community a reality.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.